

Winchester Conservation Commission Meeting March 2016

Present were: Gus Ruth, Bonnie Leveille, Norm Sims, Mim Johnson, Ben Kilanski, Beth Pelton, Paul Hubner, Jon Baldvins, Jim Ammann, John Hann. Guest: Bill Johnson

Meeting was called to order at 7:05PM.

Bill Johnson was present to invite the WCC to attend a joint meeting of VT Conservation Commissions. Bill is from Dummerston and stated that neighboring CC's meet twice a year. The next meeting is March 31st and he would like representatives from Winchester to attend and perhaps speak about the NED pipeline and Meeting House Hill. Gus agreed to try and get a couple members together to attend.

February minutes were not presented as they require monetary amounts. Irene Ruth completed the minutes but the amounts were requested to be part of the final minutes. Ben will provide Bonnie with the monetary amounts and the minutes will be approved at the April meeting.

Meeting House Hill:

Gus, Ben and John met with Leah Hart from the Society for the Protection of NH Forests to inspect the Meeting House Hill property. After walking the property lines, there were two concerns: use or removal of the building at the base and dumping issues by abutters on to Meeting House Hill land.

Discussion followed on what to do about the building. Ben had talked to Henry Parkhurst about donating the building to the Cemetery. The Highway Dept is willing to move it to the cemetery after the addition is removed. To date Dean Beaman has not returned the keys as requested so that the CC can remove maps, picnic tables and other articles from the building. John suggested that the BOS assume the responsibility of what to do.

Mim made a motion recommending that the BOS assume the responsibility of the removal of the building at Meeting House Hill and restore the grounds to the easement criteria of the Society for the Protection of NH Forests and to have Ben be the representative as BOS and CC member in this matter. Motion passed.

Ben will present the letter/report from the Society to the BOS. A copy of the letter, as well as a response to the report, (to be written by Gus Ruth and Mim Johnson) will be entered in the files. A motion was made and passed to create a Stewardship file/notebook related to managing our easements. Mim suggested that the CC create a database to document the inspections, etc of the CC easements. Gus will make a complete list of the properties and bring to the April meeting. The CC agreed to have this project completed within a year, i.e., inspection and documentation of all easements.

The Society was also concerned about debris found. John and Gus have removed some of the debris onto the abutter's properties. A suggestion was made to mark the boundaries to stress the lines to prevent further encroachment by abutters.

Trails:

A discussion was held on the Connector Trail from VT (Pisgah) to MA and possible routes to make the connection through Winchester. Norm stated that representatives from the AMC are coming on the 31st to walk possible connections. There is \$3500.00 available to accomplish this connection from the AMC.

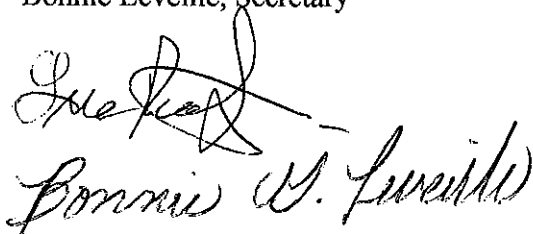
Old Growth Forests:

A discussion was held on the possibility of Old Growth Forests in Winchester. There is evidence that there are Old Growth areas as well as areas that will become in the near future Old Growth forests. The areas should be part of the new Natural Resource Inventory. Norm spoke of two experts and how to determine criteria to document the trees. Pisgah has Old Growth areas and the AMC has recorded trails to monitor and see them. Bob Leverett will be here in April to look at any possible sites. It was also noted that any property owners on the pipeline route who have unlogged property should document this as FERC will not go through Old Growth areas.

Jim brought up finding large scale trash and dumping on Piney Woods Road and wondered how we could clean it up. He stated that there had been a lot of dumping on the Cole's property. The CC will look into how to clean it up.

Motion to adjourn at 9:40PM.

Submitted by:
Bonnie Leveille, Secretary

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Bonnie W. Leveille". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the typed name.